



# Oaklands Junior School

*Learning to think - Thinking to learn*

## Autumn 1 NEWSLETTER 2017

Where did that half term go? They say time flies quickly when you enjoy yourself and we have certainly been doing a lot of enjoyable activities in our learning, as you will see by what has been happening in all year groups. May I just thank Y6 and 5H staff and pupils for their recent assemblies, which were well attended by many family members.

### Corvus Learning Trust

Thank you to all the parents that attended the consultation meetings at Edgbarrow on 3<sup>rd</sup> October, Oaklands Juniors on 10<sup>th</sup> October or the Edgbarrow evening on 12<sup>th</sup> October. Your attendance, questions and contributions were very much appreciated and this will be added to the FAQs - the consultation ends at the ends of today.

As academisation draws closer (we are aiming for 1<sup>st</sup> December, although this may be delayed until 1<sup>st</sup> January), we are now becoming increasingly excited about the opportunities to work more closely together for the benefit of all our children and families. However, with regard to the curriculum and teaching you will not see any visible change, as Oaklands Juniors will maintain its ethos, Thinking Schools and uniform etc. Our children's futures and the future of this school has been paramount throughout the academisation process.

### Safeguarding

We were very pleased to welcome representatives from the NSPCC this term for a whole school assembly for keeping safe. This was well-received by children and staff. Y5 & Y6 then continued with one hour workshops in each class. This is something that we aim to do every 2 years, so that our Y3 & Y4 children, when they move to Y5 & Y6, will be able to take part in these workshops too. It was all done in a very caring 'child-friendly' way and the children enjoyed doing the actions for the Childline number!

### Double-Decker Bus

Thank you to the kind parents who have donated bean bags for this project – if there are any further donations, these would be very gratefully received. Also if there is someone or a group of people who may like to be involved in this project, as there is a huge amount of work still to do before we even get the bus on site; a hardstanding needs to be created, before we even think about decoration inside and out or electrics / wifi or furniture! Mr Lee would love to hear from you.

### Pond Refurbishment

We are now looking at Spring Half Term for this project to begin. Thank you very much for all the donations of paddling pools and an offer of containers!

### Thinking Schools

#### Latest News

As part of the Oaklands Mindset, each year group has studied a different aspect of metacognition, including brain structure and types, the Learning Line and Multiple Intelligences. Their Thinking will be recorded in a Learning Journal that will remain with each child throughout school.

Our first Thinking Families lunch of the year took place on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October.

### Important Dates

#### October

30<sup>th</sup> Oct INSET ~ Pupils return Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup>

#### November

4<sup>th</sup> PTA Fireworks Display  
6<sup>th</sup> Parents' Evening  
8<sup>th</sup> Parents' Evening  
17<sup>th</sup> Children in Need

#### December

1<sup>st</sup> PTA non-uniform day  
6<sup>th</sup> Decoration Day  
9<sup>th</sup> PTA Xmas Fayre  
12<sup>th</sup> Y3 Play afternoon  
13<sup>th</sup> Y3 Play Evening  
14<sup>th</sup> Christmas Carol Concert & Christmas lunch  
19<sup>th</sup> Xmas sing-a-long at 1.30

**School ends 2.15pm**

# What has been happening in Years 3 & 4?

## Year 3

This half term started with a bang for Year 3 as they became detectives, exploring their new classes and school. This included dressing up in disguise and using a magnifying glass to find out where things are kept in their classroom. We also discovered interesting things about our school grounds by going on a boundary walk and looking for shapes on the playground. We learnt how to find our way around outside by doing some orienteering.

Our RE topic has been about belonging. We thought about all the clubs and different groups to which we belong. The children learnt about becoming a Sikh and shared in an Amrit ceremony. The highlight of this topic was when they made The 5 Ks out of paper and dressed one of their group to look like a Kalsa Sikh.

In History we are finding out about the Ancient Egyptians. So far we have labelled a map of Ancient Egypt complete with The River Nile and the Black Lands next to the river, where the soil was rich and ideal for growing crops. We have been to the computer suite to research what life would have been like for the Ancient Egyptians, where we were able to compare and contrast the life of a farmer to a nobleman. We are excited to continue with this topic after half term which will include the infamous Egyptian Day!

In Science, we have been learning about how plants grow. The highlight of this has been planting broad beans and recording their progress in plant diaries. We have been amazed with how much our beanstalks have grown - they have turned our classrooms into jungles! Mr Hopley and some of the children have now planted their bean plants in the Y3 garden, whilst others will be taken home to plant. As our English topic has been instruction writing, we wrote a set of instructions on "How to Plant a Seed". We remembered to use imperative verbs and adverbs for time, to make instructions clear and detailed.

Finally, we have been very impressed with the quality of the homework that has been handed in this week. Year 3 should feel very proud of the time, effort and creativity that has been put into their chosen homework activities.

Well done Y3 for settling in so well to the Juniors. We hope that you have a fabulous break and we look forward to seeing you after half term, when we will be getting ready for our Christmas play.

## Year 4

During our first half-term in Year 4, we have based our curriculum around the Romans and the impact that they had on Britain. We have also been lucky enough to be trialling the use of i-pads, which the children (and staff!) have thoroughly enjoyed.

In English, the children have been researching different aspects of life in Roman Britain, using both books and the i-Pads to search on-line. With the wealth of information that they gathered, the children have subsequently created e-books, which they are looking forward to sharing with everyone on Roman Day next month.

We have also introduced the children to some of the key areas of learning in English (namely adjectival phrases, fronted adverbials and how to punctuate speech). We will be focussing on the use of these aspects of the English curriculum in the months to come.

As part of the Roman Britain history unit, the children have also been learning about Boudicca and her attempted revolution, as well as designing and making mosaics.

In Games, the children have enjoyed honing their tag rugby skills and in PE they have been developing their gym skills in the 'Rock and Roll' unit, in which Mr Lee has worked with them to improve their forward, pencil and teddy bear rolls as well as their rocking motions and balances.

Throughout the half-term, the children have also been learning about the Jewish faith and how the Torah Scrolls are sacred to Jews. As part of this they have thought about objects that are special to them.

This week, Year 4 had a fantastic day out at Wellington College, run by the Newbury Agricultural Society, learning more about the Autumn harvest. The children learnt about different types of vegetables and apples and took part in lots of fun activities including tasting food and apple bobbing! Thank you to all the helpers that gave up their day to accompany us.

Wishing you all a great half-term!

The Year 4 team

# What has been happening in Years 5 & 6?

## Year 5

Children in Year 5 have been enthusiastically rising to the challenge of entering the upper school and carrying out all the extra duties that go with this. These responsibilities have included taking on whole school roles such as recycling, playground and chair monitors.

In English we have been enjoying David Walliams' book "Ratburger". Alongside our writing, we have been discussing important issues raised in the book. Children have improvised drama based around bullying themes and have produced illustrations based on the characters. In art, we have also studied Cezanne and produced a range of interpretations of his paintings in chalk and pencil.

During computing lessons, we have thought in detail about e-safety and have been learning computer coding through the program Scratch. After a few weeks of tennis skills, we have now moved on to hockey in our games lessons and a mixture of circuits and volleyball skills in our PE sessions.

Our final week of the term has been very eventful. On Tuesday we held a Diwali Day. Children spent the day learning about aspects of Diwali including cooking, designing cards and dancing. The day culminated in a Diwali feast with our delicious onion bhajis and samosas. Many thanks to the lovely parents who helped us to make them (and wash up!). A special thanks to Mrs Riley Marsh for the coconut Diwali barfi too. On Thursday, 5H children wrote and performed an assembly all about bullying and how to deal with it. They identified four main types of bullying and created plays to illustrate the characteristics of each type of bullying and what could be done to prevent it happening. They showed their anti-bullying posters and promoted the messages from our NSPCC / Childline workshop from earlier in the term.

After our short break, we look forward to another exciting term, starting with sausage making!

## Year 6

We have now come to the end of a busy, yet rewarding, first half term.

Our English focus has been on using persuasive language to encourage visitors to Osmington Bay. We have also begun reading Kensuke's Kingdom, using the themes as a starting point to develop descriptive writing.

Our topic work has also been centred upon coastlines. Among other things, we have made pop up headlands, discussed various methods of sea defences to protect the coast, designed our own sea defence systems and re-created our own version of Hokusai's Great Wave in art.

In Science we have completed work on the subject of living things and their habitats. This has included designing our own species of animal or plant and creating a fact file all about habitats, diet and reproduction.

In PE we have completed coastal dances and learnt how to play tag rugby. Many of the children have already had the opportunity to participate in a range of sporting activities against other schools.

As the children are now in Year 6, they have been given more responsibility within the school and have taken on their roles with due diligence. We have selected House and Sports Captains and those chosen are already growing into their roles.

Let's not forget the trip to Osmington Bay! It is always a highlight of the year, where the children learn so much about themselves and their peers; away in an exciting and challenging setting.

We are very pleased with the attitude Year 6 have shown to start the year and look forward to continuing to share their learning journey.

# Further News



## **Children in Need**

We will be raising money for this very worthwhile charity on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November. This will be a non-uniform day with the theme of 'wear something spotty'. Donations of £1 will be greatly appreciated. We will also have our giant plastic Pudsey Bear sheet on the ground, under the sail at the start of school, for you to cover with your loose change, so anything you can give would be greatly appreciated. Our Y6 children will be involved during the day in calculating the amount raised, so that we can let you know the total amount raised.

## **School Lunches**

There appears to be some confusion amongst a few parents regarding school lunches. We informed parents, at the end of last term, that Caterlink were increasing the meal price to £2 from September 2017. School dinners need to be paid for in advance and not in arrears. At the end of each term the school becomes liable for parent debt to Caterlink. We have to settle their account and then ensure that parents repay the school. We would therefore very much appreciate it if you could ensure that your account is in credit. We cannot afford to lose money we have dedicated to educational resources that our children need, for non-payment of debt. Persistent offenders may be asked to provide a packed lunch.

## **Donations for Art & DT**

Thank you to all of you who have donated £20 to the school to help with the cost of materials for Art & DT. So far we have received £1,285 out of a possible total of £4,900. If you have not already done so and you can contribute towards this, we would be most grateful as we can then provide the children with a wider range of quality resources, which certainly enhances our curriculum with their creativity.

## **Class Assemblies**

Please may we politely remind you that access to assemblies that you are invited to, is around the school and through the playground to the hall door. 9.00am is a very busy time for the office dealing with telephone calls, medical needs, visitors to the school for other reasons etc. so your help would be very much appreciated in getting yourself independently to the hall via the playground. Thank you.

*Enjoy your half term holiday and please take care if you are having any fireworks*